



March 15, 2018

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

[Submitted via FCC Electronic Comments Filing System]

**Re: Submission of Results of New York City Commissioned Study Following the Chelsea Bombing
Wireless Emergency Alerts - PS Docket 15-91 Improving Wireless Emergency Alerts and
Community-Initiated Alerting**

Dear Secretary Dortch:

At the request of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau ("the Commission"), New York City Emergency Management ("NYCEM") is submitting a full copy of the study we commissioned to analyze alert recipient behavior and related issues following the citywide Wireless Emergency Alert message related to the Chelsea, Manhattan bombing in 2016.

As noted in NYCEM's prior filings, the results of this study clearly demonstrates the need for the Wireless Emergency Alert system to be upgraded to support the inclusion of multimedia. Beyond NYCEM's filings, I strongly recommend the Commission review the filings by New York City Police Commissioner James O'Neil and the multiple filings by public safety organizations throughout the country who continue to stress the criticality of this enhancement.

NYCEM looks forward to continuing to work with the Commission, wireless industry, and our other partners on the improvement of our nation's alerting system. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin J. Krakauer", written over a horizontal line.

Benjamin J. Krakauer, MPA
Assistant Commissioner, Strategy & Program Development



TO NYC Emergency Management
FROM Global Strategy Group
DATE September 28, 2016
RE **Survey Findings & Analysis: Emergency Alerts Survey**

OVERVIEW

The communication of the Wireless Emergency Alert on the morning of Monday September 19th regarding the bombing suspect Ahmad Khan Rahami was appreciated by New Yorkers who received the message. The vast majority believed it was an appropriate use of the system (89% appropriate) and less than 1% unsubscribed from the service following the alert. Although most could not correctly recall what time they received the message by the time our survey was conducted, over a quarter reported receiving the message between 7:30 and 8:30 am (27%).

The alert, which prompted users to “see media for pic” of the suspect, convinced nearly half of recipients to view a photo of Rahami. Although it is self-reported (and probably socially desirable to take this action), fully 45% ultimately went to media reports to view a photo. Those who didn’t said it was because they did not have time, were at work, or believed it was too much work to turn to the media for the picture. The survey shows broad support for updating these messages to include a direct link to view photos of the suspect, as 83% believe it would be useful to include such a link in wireless alerts.

A majority of New Yorkers are also supportive of sending an additional Spanish translation of the alerts that are sent out. While most prefer they receive the English translation first (71% ok), over half (55%) would still be okay if the Spanish translation was sent to their phone before the version in English.

CONTEXT

Reception of Alert

Prior to the emergency alert sent out to New York City residents on Monday September 19th regarding Ahmad Khan Rahami, over three quarters (78% familiar) were already familiar with the Wireless Emergency Alert system. Among those most likely to be familiar with the system are college educated men (84% said they were familiar with it), Hispanics (84%), and Bronx residents (83%), while Manhattan residents were the least familiar (72%).

Overwhelmingly, New Yorkers believe the alert sent out about Rahami was an appropriate use of the Wireless Emergency Alert system (89% appropriate).

- Older residents (residents over the age of 55) are among the most likely to believe the alert for Rahami was appropriate (95%). The alert is also supported by residents in Queens (93%) and Brooklyn (92%), as well as men overall (93%).
 - Less than a tenth of those surveyed feel that the alert was a misuse of the Wireless Emergency Alert system (7% inappropriate). Of this group, over a quarter (26%) believe it was inappropriate because
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they did not find the alert useful or effective. Others cited that the alert was “over the top” and “more scary than useful” (15%) or objected because there was no proof that Rahami was guilty (13%).

- Despite their objection, only 9% of this group decided to opt out of the Wireless Emergency Alert system following this alert. This represents less than 1% overall.

Effectiveness of Alert

On the morning of September 19th, New York City Emergency Management sent out their alert searching for Rahami slightly after 8 am. While a plurality (37%) could not recall what time they received the alert three days after the event, 27% reported receiving the alert between 7:30 and 8:30am.

Due to the current restrictions on the Wireless Emergency Alert System by the FCC, a link to the suspect could not be embedded in the alert. Instead, the alert directed New Yorkers to view media coverage for a picture of Rahami. The alert succeeded in getting 45% to look for the photo, while a small majority (53%) did not look for a photo.

- A combination of time and work present the largest barriers to turning to media reports to view an actual photo of the suspect. Not having time to check (21%), being at work (10%), and viewing the reports was “too much work” (9%), account for 40% of the excuses as to why New Yorkers did not seek out a photo of the suspect.
- New Yorkers least likely to look at the message include Brooklyn residents (60% didn’t look at a photo), Manhattan residents (59%), Black residents (59%), adults with no children (59%), and women (58%),
- Residents more likely than the overall sample to view the photo include adults with children (54% viewed the photo), college educated men (54%), Queens residents (51%) and men (50%).

New Yorkers largely support including links to view photos of the suspects mentioned (83% said it would be helpful). Given that the largest barrier for failing to view a photo of the suspect was that it would require too much time, including a link to this information could be extraordinarily helpful in encouraging more to view photos of the suspect.

- Nearly all men over 55 said they would find it helpful to have a link included in the alerts (97%). Others with a high propensity to say a link would be helpful include Black residents (89%) and residents ages 45-64 (87%).
- Only 12% of residents say including a direct link to view a photo of the suspect would not have been helpful to them.

A majority also believe it would be helpful if they were able to respond to messages sent out via the Wireless Emergency Alert System (59% helpful), though this ability is seen as less useful than direct links.

- Residents most likely to find this feature most helpful include New Yorkers between 45-64 years of age (69% helpful), Hispanics (68%), and those without a college degree (66%).
- Those most likely to say it is unhelpful include Whites (49% unhelpful) and those with a college degree (41%).

Spanish Language

As long as New Yorkers continue to receive an English transmission of the Wireless Emergency Alert System, the majority are fine with also receiving a Spanish translation of alerts.

Close to three quarters of New Yorkers report that it would be okay if they were sent a second transmission of an emergency alert in Spanish after receiving the message first in English (71% ok).

- Residents most likely to say it would be okay include Hispanics (82%), Black residents (79%), college educated men (76%), non-college educated women (76%), and Manhattan residents (76%).
- However, a quarter (25% bother) object to sending a Spanish translation of the message. This group is more likely to be white (37%), college educated women (32%), and men under the age of 55 (29%).

A majority support sending a Spanish translation of the alert even if that alert arrives before the English message (55% say this is okay), but there is markedly less support for this proposal. The percentage of New Yorkers who would be bothered by receiving the Spanish message increases by 13 points if the Spanish message comes before the English message (from 25% to 38% bothered).

- Three quarters of English speaking Hispanics say it would be okay a Spanish alert prior to an English version of the same message (76% ok).
- A majority of whites would be bothered if they had received a Spanish alert before seeing the English version (54% bothered). Older New Yorkers (over the age of 55) are also opposed (47%). Whereas 79% of Blacks were okay receiving a Spanish translation of the alert after receiving the English, only 52% say it would okay if that order were reversed.

Lastly, we gauged if New Yorkers would be bothered if Emergency Alerts were sent out only in Spanish and not in English. A majority of New Yorkers would be bothered if no English translation of the alert was sent out (40% say it would be okay, 56% say they would be bothered).

- Only a majority of English speaking Hispanics (68% ok) would be in favor of only Spanish language alerts being sent out.
- The groups who would be most bothered by receiving only a Spanish translation of alerts include: whites (72% say they would be bothered), Blacks (64%), and older New Yorkers (63%).

METHODOLOGY

GSG conducted a live telephone survey from September 22nd-25th of 400 residents of NYC who acknowledged receiving the wireless emergency alert regarding Ahmad Khan Rahami on Monday September 19th. We reached 55% of participants on their cellphone. The sampling margin of error is +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error is larger for sub-samples.